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City's Parking Ordinance Postponed

By Mike Steely
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The proposed parking ordinance that the Metropolitan Planning Commission has been working on at the request of the city was postponed Thursday afternoon during a four hour long meeting.

The MPC vote, on a motion by Laura Cole, was postponed in a vote of 10-5 and that wasn't the only split vote of the long session. MPC Director Gerald Green had told the appointed commissioners that late comments were received about the proposed rules prompting the postponement.

Voting NO on the postponement were Art Clancy, Elizabeth Eason, Chris Ooten, Scott Smith and Janice Tocher.

Another split vote, 9-5 with one abstaining, came on a concept plan for Westland Oaks subdivision on the Northwest side of N. Campbell Station Road which was also postponed until next month.

Trying to adopt standards for the approval of indoor and outdoor paintball and air soft ranges was denied by the commissioners in an 8-7 vote. The ordinance would have made indoor facilities require a use-on-review before approval in Agricultural Districts.

Caroline Greenwood of Boomerang Lane spoke against the idea saying it didn't give communities enough protection and said the use of a large building in an agricultural area crosses over into a commercial use.

One commissioner compared buildings housing paintball or air soft ranges to corn mazes and pumpkin patches that help farms or agricultural businesses maintain.

Commissioner Charles Thomas said the rural areas need protection and said, "This is going over the line too much to industrial."

The commissioners also split on a vote to approve a Use On Review for the USA Compound on Magnolia Avenue, a proposed 8-unit apartment that will probably house Pellissippi students. The planning staff had asked that the approval be postponed until May. Attorney Arthur Seymour, Jr., speaking for the owner, said that the front elevation drawings were submitted and asked the planners to approve, which they did.

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Pawn shop rejected by council



PHOTO BY MIKE STEELY

This empty building, the former site of Harry Lane Super Store, was to become a pawn shop. The City Council rejected an appeal using the new Alternative Financial Services policy.

By Mike Steely
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The city's new Alternative Financial Services policy got its first test Tuesday when Capso Properties requested the city council overturn a denial for a pawn shop at 3515 North Broadway.

The company wanted to operate in the former location of the Harry Lane

Superstore but some of the neighbors objected to any variance from the 1,000 foot distance now required between an alternative financial store and a residence or other such store. The Board of Zoning Appeals had turned down the request in a vote of 4-1 and Capso was appealing this decision.

Tony Cappiello spoke for Capso and said the

proposed business would be like "a Walmart" in appearance and that the company proceeded in buying the building after receiving a letter from the city that the business was approved for that zoning area.

Deborah Thomas of the Oakwood-Lincoln Park Neighborhood spoke in opposition and said the

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PHOTO BY KEN LAY

Athletes from Amherst Elementary School march in the Parade of Champions in the opening ceremonies of the 2017 Special Olympics Track and Field Invitational last week at Hardin Valley Academy. The event played host to 600 competitors.

Student athletes compete in Special Olympics at HVA

By Ken Lay

Hundreds of elementary and middle school athletes converged at Hardin Valley Academy for the 2017 Knox County Special Olympics Track and Field Invitational.

The event featured 600 athletes from Knox County Schools, Anderson County Schools, Clinton City Schools, Tennessee School for the Deaf and Oak Ridge City Schools, according to Knox County Special Olympics Co-Director Tim Lee.

Several people helped make it happen on Monday, April 10 but one Hardin Valley senior undertook the task of being director of the meet.

Morgan Jones learned that she and several of her friends would be charged with putting on the meet and for her, it was a labor of love.

"I work in our peer tutoring program here and I love it," Jones said. "I love working with kids and for me, it's an honor to do this."

The festive day had a disc



Powell Middle School's Daniel Byrd receives a bronze medal in last Monday's Special Olympics Track and Field Invitational. Byrd took third place in the softball throwing competition at Hardin Valley Academy.

jockey spinning tunes from all eras and was everything that one would expect from a track meet. Winners achieved medals on this sunsplashed mid-spring day and the air had the aroma of grilled hamburgers and hot

dogs. Jones, who had plenty of help, was there to serve the athletes. But she received a reward of her own.

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Board of Education adopts budget

By Pete Gawda

After much discussion the Knox County Board of Education approved a general fund budget of \$471,146,000 which is an approximate 4% increase over the current budget year. This budget includes a 3% pay increase for teachers and a \$1 an hour increase for teaching assistants.

With no discussion the board unanimously approved a school nutrition budget of \$28,570,000 which includes a three percent raise for food service personnel. There was also no discussion and a unanimous vote for the school system's capital improvement budget. This budget includes \$5 million for the start-up of the two new middle schools, \$1.75 million for physical plant upgrades, \$250,000 for modular classrooms, \$200,000 for environmental testing and remedial projects and \$1.5 million for improvements to the kitchen at Powell Middle School.

Several parents voiced concern over cuts in the assistive technology program. One parent, Jennifer Hagle, mother of two children with dyslexia, called the proposed reduction "equivalent to taking a student's glasses away from them."

Lauren Hopson, president of the Knox County Education Association, stressed that she was speaking for staff and students. She expressed displeasure with what she called a budget that is pushed through so quickly. She also expressed displeasure in funding for assistive technology. She stated that in the budget process there is usually a choice between spending money for teacher salaries or for other things.

New superintendent Bob Thomas stated that what the school board was looking at is the bottom line of broad categories.

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